

Claims

1. Insertion sleeve assembly (10) comprising an insertion instrument (3) for performing a medical operation and a sleeve (12) of bio-absorbable material guiding said instrument,
5 characterised in that said sleeve is made of a material that is relatively rigid outside the body and becomes softer after introduction into the body and collapses onto itself when the instrument is withdrawn.
2. Insertion sleeve assembly according to Claim 1, wherein said sleeve (12) is made of a
10 material that is relatively rigid at temperatures below 30 °C and not in contact with water and is relatively soft at temperatures between 35 °C and 40 °C and in contact with moisture.
3. Insertion sleeve assembly according to one of the preceding claims, wherein said
15 material comprises a material from the group comprising: polyglycolide; poly-ε-caprolactone-DL-lactide copolymer; ε-caprolactone; D-lactide; L-lactide; DL-lactide and poly(DL-lactide-co-glycolide).
4. Insertion sleeve according to one of the preceding claims, wherein said material
20 comprises a combination of polyglycolide (30 - 50 % by wt), polylactic acid (25 - 50 % by wt) and caprolactone (4 - 25 % by wt).
5. Insertion sleeve assembly according to one of the preceding claims, wherein said
25 sleeve has blood-staunching properties on the outside.
6. Insertion sleeve assembly according to one of the preceding claims, wherein said
sleeve is provided with at least two break points (8), the minimal distance from the distal
break point to the distal end being 10 mm and the distance between said break locations
being less than 20 mm.
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7. Insertion sleeve assembly according to Claim 6, having at least five break locations.

8. Insertion sleeve assembly according to one of the preceding claims in combination with Claim 6, wherein said sleeve is designed for direct contact with said insertion instrument and the body.
- 5 9. Insertion sleeve assembly according to Claim 8, wherein the distance between said break locations is 3 - 10 mm.
- 10 10. Insertion sleeve assembly according to one of the preceding claims in combination with Claim 6, wherein said sleeve comprises a continuous base sleeve of flexible material and a number of rings (7) arranged around it.
11. Insertion sleeve assembly according to Claim 10, wherein said sleeve has a wall thickness of 0.1 - 1.5 mm.
- 15 12. Insertion sleeve according to Claim 10 or 11, wherein said rings are made of a blood-staunching material.